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Portland, OR 97230

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OREGON OPERATIONS OFFICE

August 19, 2016

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EPA-REGION 10

U.S. EPA

ATTN: Harbor Comments

805 SW Broadway, Suite 500

Portland, OR 97205

I am a lifelong resident of Oregon who is very concerned about the EPA's plan to clean up the pollution in the riverbed of the local Willamette River. The EPA's plan to dredge the Willamette River and transport the contaminated sediment elsewhere simply does not suffice. The invasive and costly plan to dredge this 10-mile stretch of the Willamette does not guarantee a cleaner river and could, in fact, make the river's condition even worse. Further, the EPA has estimated that this plan would cost \$746 million dollars and could take years. In November 2015, the EPA estimated that this plan would cost \$1.4 billion dollars. Either of these costs is too great to expect the Portland community to shoulder through increased taxes. This plan could not only damage the river, but also harm Portland's families, including my own. The EPA should consider other, less invasive and less costly solutions to this problem.

The EPA seeks to dredge 167 acres of contaminated sediment and remove 1.9 million cubic yards of sediment from the river and transport it to a landfill. This plan is based on old data that the EPA collected in 2004 and 2008. In 2014, experts studying the Willamette River found that the river is recovering. Through natural restoration, there has already been a 40% reduction of contamination in the water. The EPA has entirely ignored this data to focus on a drastic plan that would make the river inaccessible for years. My husband and I are seniors, and the Willamette River is an important part of our lives. One of our favorite things to do is to take our boat out on the river and go fishing. It is about the only thing we do in our spare time! Spending time on the river is a popular pastime for many local families, especially those who cannot afford other activities. I am entirely against any plan that would take the river away from Portland families for years to come.

The huge cost of the EPA's plan would take too much money out of the economy that we just don't have. This plan would result in higher taxes for Oregon residents. I am retired, but my husband still works. We can't afford any more taxes, period. If taxes were to increase, my husband and I would have to sell our home. I have lived here all my life, for seventy-two years. I raised my six children here, and we have dealt with the river's pollution for most of our lives. There must be a way to restore the river without disrupting the lives of local residents, forcing us to pay higher taxes, and turning the Willamette River into a construction zone for decades. Instead of spending millions of dollars to dredge the river and do more harm than good, money could be spent to help local people living on the streets, especially poor families with children. The Willamette River is taking care of itself. We should absolutely not do anything that could damage it further.

Sincerely,

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